



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

---

Contact Don Ledford, Public Affairs • (816) 426-4220 • 400 East Ninth Street, Room 5510 • Kansas City, MO 64106

[www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow)

---

**MAY 12, 2004**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **JOPLIN MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CRACK COCAINE CONSPIRACY**

**SPRINGFIELD, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Joplin, Mo., man pleaded guilty in federal court today to participating in a conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine in Jasper County, Mo.

**Justin L. Triplett**, 29, of Joplin, pleaded guilty before U.S. Magistrate Judge James C. England this morning to conspiracy to distribute 50 grams or more of crack cocaine between January 1999 and December 2000.

**Triplett** admitted that others involved in the conspiracy traveled to Tulsa, Okla., to obtain crack cocaine, which they distributed to **Triplett** when they returned to Joplin. **Triplett** then distributed crack cocaine to other individuals. The total amount of crack cocaine attributable to **Triplett** during the course of the conspiracy, Graves said, is between 150 and 500 grams.

**Triplett** was originally charged in a superseding indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Springfield on June 10, 2002.

Under federal statutes, **Triplett** could be subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in federal prison without parole, up to life imprisonment, plus a fine up to \$4 million. His sentence will be determined according to the United States Sentencing Guidelines. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David Rush. It was investigated by the Joplin, Mo., Police Department, the Jasper County Drug Task Force, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Joplin Area Major Case Squad, the Tulsa, Okla., Police Department, the Missouri State Highway Patrol, the Jasper County, Mo., Sheriff's Department, the Newton County, Mo., Sheriff's

Department, COMET (the Combined Ozarks Multi-jurisdictional Enforcement Team), and the Springfield, Mo., Police Department.

\*\*\*\*\*

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at  
[www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow)